



Senator Donzella James

Senate District 35



Democratic Senator Donzella James represents Metropolitan Atlanta's 35th District of Georgia which includes portions of Fulton and Douglas Counties. She was elected to the State Senate in 1994 to fill the unexpired term of the late Sen. Arthur Langford. She proudly served four and one half full terms and retired to offer herself to serve in the US Congress. In 2009 Senator James was re-elected to serve once again in the State Senate.

Senator James is a member of the Education and Youth, Special Judiciary, State Institutions and Property, and State and Local Governmental Operations committees. She has worked to bring progressive change in the area of crime reduction, a safe and clean environment, stronger drunk driving laws and drug trafficking laws, economic development, increased access to affordable healthcare and quality education.

Sen. James authored and passed the Child Endangerment bill and the Child Sexual Commerce Act of 2001, Teenager Responsibility Act, and habitual drunk-driving laws. Throughout her tenure she earned the distinguished reputation of being the voice of the voiceless. She championed an effort to stop an Indy 500 style race track by passing a bill which prohibited the construction of racetracks in residential neighborhoods. This prompted the construction of multi-retail outlets (Camp Creek Market Place) now responsible for local economic development and career opportunities for our citizens. As a successful entrepreneur, she understands the importance of fair and equitable business opportunities; therefore she authored legislation to support small business by mandating that all bids for Georgia state service and supply contracts be posted on-line to enforce open access and fair consideration for all small businesses.

In 1994, Sen. James was elected to represent the State of Georgia as a Fleming Fellow for the National Center for Policy Alternatives. In 2000, she received the prestigious honor of the JFK Profiles in Courage honorable mention award for authoring and introducing the acclaimed "Zero Waste By 2020" legislation which went on to be adopted in twenty other states. Donzella James was the 1999 recipient of the Eleanor Roosevelt Fellowship at the National Center for Policy Alternatives. She also was a recipient of the freshman

of the Year Legislator award in 1994, and awarded Legislator of the Year in both 1997 and 2000, she went on to pass over 270 pieces of legislation. Sen. James authored legislation to create the Senate Eviction Law Study Committee which examined current eviction procedures with an eye toward making them less disruptive. She chaired the Senate Study Committee on Solid Waste Reduction; and received the “Legislative Service Award” honors from both the Georgia Municipal Association and the Association of County Commissioners of Georgia. The National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees and the Georgia Highway Safety Management System have also cited James for her superior legislative leadership.

As a leader in community affairs, and Co-chairperson of “Keep South Fulton Beautiful”, Sen. James has been consistent in promoting the “Green Movement” as a global perspective. She served as a delegate of three national Democratic conventions. She was a member of South Fulton’s Vision 2000; the Atlanta Women’s Political Caucus; the National Political Congress of Black Women; the National, the Association of Negro Business and Professional Women; and the chairperson of the Education Committee of the Tri-Cities cluster of the Atlanta Project. Sen. James was elected by her peers to serve in 1994-2002 as editor and assistant secretary to the Georgia Association of Black Elected Officials (GABEO). She also served as National Assistant Secretary and Executive Board member of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) from 1997 to 2002. Sen. James has traveled the world as an Ambassador for Peace. She has consulted directly with diplomats, kings, prime ministers and presidents of many nations. Senator James currently co-hosts a weekly show called “Radio Haitian Voice International” a multi-lingual community outreach radio and internet program, broadcasted Saturdays and Sundays in Atlanta, Georgia.

She has been co-founder and chairperson of the Task Force for Good Government; served on the Benjamin E. Mays High School Advisory Council; and the Board of Directors Advisory Committee of the Atlanta Job Corporation. She also serves on several boards that include Tapestry Ministry for unwed teen mothers; Georgia soccer association; Sonje Yo human rights and human trafficking organization and others.

Sen. James has been a steadfast advocate for middle-class families, working to help create jobs, expand children’s healthcare benefits and protect Social Security from privatization. She is strongly committed to making sure that every citizen of Georgia has the right to vote in fair, accessible and credible elections. She fought the Attorney General to ensure better protection of votes and to ensure every vote is counted “one man one vote”.

Sen. James earned a Bachelor degree in criminal justice and political science from Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia and she received an honorary Doctorate of Humanities from Macon’s Emmanuel Bible College and studied additionally at Georgia State University. Sen. James has a proven record as a successful policymaker and known to be committed to the people, a fiscally responsible professional, and a strong woman of

faith. She has been a major force for progressive change, and her commitment to family values and the salvation of Georgia's children has been exemplary.

Sen. James is a retired federal employee with dedicated service as a member of the National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees. Sen. James, a native of Atlanta, also taught in Atlanta public schools for more than a decade.

The Senator and Mr. Elmo James have been married for more than 35 years. They are parents of two sons, Brian James and the late Kerry James; daughter-in-law Cheryl Renee; and three grandchildren, Kerri, Ryan and Bryce.